

Dallas pastors urge Baptists to walk together in battling injustice

September 19, 2016

ATLANTA—Two Baptist pastors—one from a historically African-American church in South Dallas and the other from a predominantly white church in North Dallas—told the New Baptist Covenant about their journey together.

“Jesus has sent us out two-by-two to stand up against structures of injustice,” said Frederick Haynes, pastor of Friendship-West Baptist Church.

George Mason, pastor of Wilshire Baptist Church, joined to present the keynote address to the New Baptist Covenant’s 2016 Summit in Atlanta.

Their presentation, “The Journey Together,” centered on the two-person journey of the 70 disciples sent out by Jesus in chapter 10 of the Gospel of Luke. It also described the relationship Haynes and Mason and their congregations entered into in November 2013 through the New Baptist Covenant. The churches entered into a covenant to seek reconciliation and transformation in their communities through cooperative missions and advocacy to combat predatory lending.

Being in covenant relationship and standing up against injustices and systematic racism in Dallas means learning important lessons, Haynes and Mason agreed.

“This two-by-two thing is important,” Mason said. “It’s about bringing our stories together. The American story is not one story. We want to make it one story, but in doing so, we deny the story of another. We need a two-

narrative ecclesiology about the white church and the black church discovering one another.”

Learning the stories of each other and helping their congregations discover one another goes beyond “kum-bah-yah” feel-good moments, they emphasized. Together, Haynes and Mason said, their congregations are committed to putting their faith to action to create beloved community.

“It is clear we can be faithful to Christ’s vision of beloved community only when we walk side-by-side, have each other’s backs and go on this journey together,” Mason said.